

DCS service delivery

Circling children and families with Care



widen the circle of caring
support children and families
by supporting case managers

DCS Service Delivery: Circling Children & Families With Care

This graphic is an effort to refocus all of us on what is really important in our work. I worry that we may sometimes lose sight of the fact that all of us exist only to support those vulnerable families and children in the inner circle.

Our Direct Service Staff are not the bottom of the pecking order. They are at the very core of our mission. Yes, they must be held responsible for the quality of the work they do with families and children but every one of us must be responsible for how well we support, facilitate and enhance the quality of services to families and children.

These ever widening circles form a safety net that is stronger in its connections than any one isolated circle could ever be. **We need to do all in our power to help, not to create more stress for families and front-line staff.**

I'm asking everyone to think outside your own specific area of influence and ask, "What can I do today to support the case worker in quality work with families? Can I take away any burdensome requirement? How can I provide assistance in ways that will improve outcomes?"

Please don't add paper or requirements without taking others away. Look at every piece of paper that a case manager must handle. Ask some questions, such as:

- **Does it add value?**
- **Is it required for compliance?**
- **Can it be simplified?**
- **Can it be combined with others to minimize record keeping?**

I am asking each of you to look for ways to wrap around and support front-line staff. For instance:

- **Can someone else be responsible for making appointments?**
- **Can someone else enter EPSDT results?**
- **Can someone else contact schools for records?**
- **Is the clerical staff being used to support quality casework?**

Let's commit ourselves not only to not adding to the work; let's commit ourselves to making that work easier.

Now to the widening circles of care: We cannot do the work alone. We must reach out to our Community Partners. They can and will help us in our quest for quality casework.

When we form our child and family teams, community partners need to be included based on the unique strengths and needs of each family.

Think of our work as ever-widening circles of care and support for the CFT. Everything that we do exists only to ensure safety, permanency and well-being for the vulnerable families and children we serve. There is no more important work.

VIOLA P. MILLER